



1997

## Review of Travellers by Angela Grauerholz, Olga Korper Gallery, Toronto

Carr-Harris, Ian

---

### Suggested citation:

Carr-Harris, Ian (1997) Review of Travellers by Angela Grauerholz, Olga Korper Gallery, Toronto. Canadian Art, 14 (3). pp. 86-87. ISSN 0825-3854 Available at <http://openresearch.ocadu.ca/id/eprint/1098/>



1997

## Grauerholz, Angela

### Travellers

### Olga Korper Gallery, Toronto

Ian Carr-Harris

OCAD University

[icarrharris@faculty.ocadu.ca](mailto:icarrharris@faculty.ocadu.ca)

---

The following article originally appeared in *Canadian Art* (<http://canadianart.ca/>). It is reproduced here with permission.

**Suggested citation:**

Carr-Harris, Ian. "Review of Grauerholz, Angela. Travellers. Olga Korper Gallery. Toronto." *Canadian Art* 14.3 (1997): 86. Web.

# Fellow Traveller





*They are the images that we have from our memory of what the future used to look like. — Angela Grauerholz*

I'm standing, looking at a cluster of travellers boarding an airplane. The plane is not large, and there cannot be more than a dozen figures assembled on the wet tarmac. It's been raining,



though it has stopped now, and despite the brightness in the sky's horizon, everything near is dark, smudged in the gloom of a rain-soaked pause. Within this ambiguity, a white line painted luminously on the surface of the runway intersects with me at the centre of my vision. My viewpoint seems picked out, as in a perspective study, and the scene before me, despite its indeterminacy, becomes an exercise in the appropriateness of things in the world.

I'm standing in the Olga Korper Gallery, looking at *Travellers* by Angela Grauerholz, and the indeterminate nature of the photograph is oddly replicated here. The sun at the moment is from the west, and its light passes through the clerestory onto the gallery walls and floor in ever-shifting intensities. A thin ray just touches one edge of the austere black frame, which gives this, and the other nine works in Grauerholz's exhibition, a sense of mourning reminiscent of the black borders on commemorative stamps<sup>1</sup> in my boyhood collection. I experience a sense of epiphany as I watch the sunlight's measurement of time deepen and intensify the image's own suspension of time. I think about Angela Grauerholz's remark about memory and future.

There is a point of view central to all these works, and *Travellers* is emblematic in this respect. Each occupies language in a double register. Let's call the first a declension, because it's about naming, or placing. As I occupy that view of the runway in the picture, it occurs to me I am privileged in several ways: by my apartness from the travellers, by the darkness which envelopes me, by the centrality mapped by the white line; by the black frame itself. There is a reiteration of separation; I had been *declined*. In precisely which grammatical case, however, remains obscure, and within that obscurity I am displaced, named a *flâneur*, a nomad, ironically a fellow traveller.

Let's call the second register a conjugation, because it's about acting, or timing. I have to think: what is it I'm doing on that runway? How is it that I'm there? And what does it signify that I am also *here*, in the gallery, watching the sunlight activate a photograph, watching it move gradually towards night? What tense do I occupy: past, present—future? Sometimes we need to listen to artists. When Angela Grauerholz speaks about her images as "what the future used to look like," I realize I can be in several tenses at once: I can be in the future anterior. And now I know my tense. I'm back in the future. ■

by IAN CARR-HARRIS

<sup>1</sup> I think of those stamps issued in 1934 to mark the death of President Hindenburg, a moment that we now invest with the Faustian tragedy of a racial hubris set in motion. Like stamps, Grauerholz's photographs are unglazed. Their smooth matte surface offers itself to our desire to touch, to trace, and to feel. They seem more like treasured snapshots lifted from an album than the broad, open windows onto a vista that we would expect from their dimensions. And this point of viewing instantly returns to me: I am ten years old, looking through my parents' photo album, black and white on black, imagining myself in their place, in their time, a place and time which is to me, now, quite simply both appropriate and unforeseeable.

**Angela Grauerholz**  
*Travellers* 1996  
Silver gelatin print,  
edition of 3 121.9 x 182.9 cm  
Courtesy: Olga Korper Gallery